

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 RANGOO 01639 150553Z

12

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 141043Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8109

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

S E C R E T RANGOON 1639

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: TECH, PARM, IN, JA

SUBJECT: INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION AND JAPAN

1. AT THE RISK OF SEEMING TO SPEAK OUT OF TURN, I ASK
LEAVE TO STATE SOME PERSONAL OPINIONS RELATING TO THE
INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. I HAVE ARGUED FOR AT LEAST
EIGHT YEARS THAT JAPAN'S NON-NUCLEAR POLICY IS BY ALL ODDS
THE WISEST ONE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF JAPAN'S REAL
SECURITY, AND THAT THE GOH, GIVEN ITS RATHER UNUSUAL ABILITY
TO APPLY HARD-HEADED SELF-INTEREST CRITERIA TO ALLOCATION-OF-
RESOURCE DECISIONS, WILL CONTINUE TO FORSWEAR NUCLEAR
WEAPONS DESPITE VERY REAL CONSIDERATIONS OF PRESTIGE AND
GLORY, AND THE LARGELY DECEPTIVE LURE OF "SPIN-OFF"
TECHNOLOGICAL BENEFITS. SPECIFICALLY, I HAVE ALSO ARGUED
REPEATEDLY SINCE 1967 THAT AN INDIAN DECISION TO ACQUIRE
A NUCLEAR WEAPON WOULD NOT CAUSE JAPAN TO FOLLOW SUIT
(AN FRG DECISION MIGHT BE A DIFFERENT MATTER).
INITIAL JAPANESE REACTION TO THE INDIAN EXPLOSION, AT LEAST
FROM SOURCES AVAILABLE THERE, SEEMS TO CONFIRM THIS JUDGMENT.

2. MY INTENT IS NOT TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO." IT IS RATHER
TO POINT UP THE VERY GREAT CONTRAST BETWEEN JAPAN'S WISDOM
AND INDIA'S UNWISDOM, AND TO EXPRESS MY HOPE THAT THE U.S.
WILL DO WHATEVER IT CAN APPROPRIATELY DO TO HEAD OFF A FULL-
FLEDGED INDIAN WEAPONS-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. FOR, EVEN IF

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INDIA'S EXAMPLE WILL NOT SEND JAPAN OFF THE DEEP END, IT CAN

OBTAINING MORE WEIGHT WITH COUNTRIES THAT HAVE NOT HAD JAPAN'S BREAK-THROUGH INSIGHTS IN REGARD TO SECURITY POLICY.

3. PERHAPS MOST OMINOUS IS THE FACT THAT INDIA IS THE FIRST OF WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED THE "HATFIELD-MCCOY" COUNTRIES TO GET A NUCLEAR WEAPON. WHILE THERE MAY BE LESS THAN TWENTY CHANCES OUT OF A HUNDRED THAT INDIA WILL USE ITS NUCLEAR WEAPON AT ALL, OF THOSE TWENTY, NINETEEN PROBABLY REPRESENT USE AGAINST PAKISTAN.

4. I AM IN NO POSITION TO SAY WHAT U.S. POLICIES MIGHT HELP HEAD OFF A FULL-FLEDGED INDIAN WEAPONS-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. WITHHOLDING WHATEVER AID WE ARE IN A POSITION TO WITHHOLD AS LONG AS INDIA IS CARRYING ON A WEAPONS PROGRAM CERTAINLY SEEMS WORTH CONSIDERING. PEOPLE WILL SAY, "OH, BUT WE WOULD SACRIFICE OUR LEVERAGE FOR INFLUENCING THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAM..." THIS ARGUMENT APPEARS TO ME TO HAVE LITTLE WEIGHT UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY SPECIFICS AS TO HOW THE "LEVERAGE" WE MIGHT CONSERVE WOULD IN FACT BE USED.
OSBORN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR TESTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RANGOO01639
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740155-1068
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740644/aaaablko.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2002 by garlanwa>; APPROVED <21 FEB 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION AND JAPAN
TAGS: TECH, PARM, IN, JA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005